(i) Continuous monitoring of movement of damaged tanker and oil spill using air and ship surveillance was undertaken.

(ii) Aerial and ship spray of chemical dispersants was done to combat the oil slick.

(iii) The damaged tanker was cleared of the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone waters.

(iv) Water samples from affected area were collected for analysis; and

(v) An initiative was taken through Ministry of External Affairs to see that adequate safety measures are taken to avoid such accidents involving tankers passing through heavily congested tanker route of States of Malacca.

(d) The oil slick was managed by Indian Coast Guard alone without any foreign assistance. No offer to assist Indian efforts was received at the time of accident to neutralise the oil slick.

Tiger Project

1055. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Tiger Project has completed two decades;

(b) if so, what were the targets set at the time of launching the project alongwith the achievements made till now;

(c) whether any new set of problems have been identified ; and

(d) if so, what are the steps proposed to be taken to tackle those problems ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The 'Project Tiger' was launched on April 1, 1973, to ensure maintenance of a viable population of tigers in India. At the time of its launch, there were 268 tigers within nine reserves, whereas the population, as per 1989 census, is 1327 tigers in 18 Tiger Reserves. The Project, apart from conserving the tiger, has also helped in protecting a wide spectrum of species of flora and fauna. The problems that are being faced in the management of these Tiger Reserves, relate mainly to the increased biotic pressure, threats from smugglers/poachers and armed activists taking refuge in the Tiger Reserve areas. These problems are being tackled appropriately, with the formulation of eco-development plans, ensuring participation of the local communities in the management of the reserves. Additionally, the patrolling have been intensified and vigilance strengthened to combat the threat of poaching.

Indo British Environment Initiative

1056. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and United Kingdom have jointly set up as Indo-British Environmental Initiative to work together on environmental issues;

(b) if so, what are the details of this agreement;

(c) whether India and China have also discussed environmental problems of the two countries as also the global issues; and